TVCC Distance Education Mission Statement
Trinity Valley Community College is a learning-centered college that provides quality academic, workforce, and community service programs to meet the educational needs of our students and the citizens of our service area. The TVCC Department of Distance Education is committed to advancing the quality of our online education to meet or exceed the standards of our courses delivered in a traditional, face-to-face manner.

Advising for Distance Education Courses and/or TVCC Online Programs
Questions about admissions, registration, entrance requirements, degree planning, transfer issues, and career counseling can be answered by any TVCC Counselor or Guidance Associate. For specific information about “getting started” with TVCC or contact information to the TVCC Guidance Offices, visit the TVCC Guidance Services webpage. Academic advising for TVCC courses is done through the use of TVCC Faculty Advisors. For contact information about academic advising for TVCC online certificate or degree programs, visit the TVCC Distance Education Online Degree Page or TVCC Distance Education Online Certificate Page or e-mail onlineprograms@tvcc.edu for answers to your questions.

Computer Requirements for Distance Education Courses
Trinity Valley Community College uses the Blackboard 9.1 learning management system for distance education courses. A high speed internet connection is suggested for best results with the applications available within the e-Course system. To determine whether or not your computer software is sufficient for the e-Course system OR to locate free software downloads which might be needed in some of the TVCC distance learning courses, visit the TVCC Distance Learning website.

Distance Education Student Orientation
A Student Orientation to Distance Learning course has been prepared for anyone who might be interested in registering for a distance education course with Trinity Valley Community College. This course is accessible to “guests” of the e-course system. To visit the student orientation, visit the TVCC e-Course log in page and select the "Preview as guest" option. Once you are “in the e-Course system” as a guest, the Student Orientation to Distance Learning course appears under "My Courses" on the right side of the screen. Click the link "Student Orientation to Distance Learning". If you have any questions, please contact the Distance Learning department at (903) 675-6324 or email ecourseshelp@tvcc.edu

Distance Education Readiness
Online learning requires motivation, self-discipline, savvy computer skills, strong study habits, and effective time management. To determine your level of “readiness” for taking online courses, you can access an inventory called Smarter Measure. Smarter Measure provides you
with an indication of the degree to which a distance learning environment will be a good fit for you. Visit the TVCC Department of Distance Learning website for access and log in instructions to Smarter Measure.

Registration for Distance Education Courses
Registration for Distance Education courses with Trinity Valley Community College will be conducted in the same manner as for traditional, face-to-face courses. While there are scheduled “walk-in” registration sessions at the TVCC campuses, students are encouraged to register ONLINE using the TVCC Cardinal Connect System. To determine whether or not you are eligible to register for your Distance Education courses online, visit the Online Registration FAQ page.

Bookstore and Textbook Information
Textbook information for your distance education courses will be provided for you in your class syllabus. Textbook(s) and other required materials can be purchased online through the TVCC bookstore website.

Course Grades and Transcript Access
Final grades for all of your TVCC courses will be available to you within one to two weeks after the end of the semester through the TVCC Cardinal Connect System Access. You may also view your TVCC transcript as well as transcript(s) from other colleges that have been submitted to the TVCC Registrar’s Office through the TVCC Cardinal Connect System.

Disability Services
Students enrolled in distance education courses with TVCC who have a documented disability are entitled to equal opportunities. Reasonable accommodations for qualified students with a diagnosed physical and/or learning disability who have been admitted to TVCC and requested accommodations will be considered. For detailed information about the Disability Services that are available at TVCC, visit the Guidance Services website.

Financial Aid
Students enrolled in distance education courses with TVCC who are interested in applying for Financial Aid should begin the application process early to ensure that the process is complete prior to registration. NOTE: The deadline to have ALL of your paperwork submitted to the TVCC Financial Aid is as follows for each of the respective semesters: Fall – July 1st; Spring – November 1st; Summer – April 1st. Visit the TVCC Financial Aid webpage for specific details on how to apply for Financial Aid.
Graduation from TVCC
During the final semester of your degree or certificate program with TVCC, a Graduation Application must be completed and filed with the Registrar’s Office in partial fulfillment of graduation requirements. Deadlines for “Application for Graduation” are published in the TVCC Academic Calendar. An “Application for Graduation” can be obtained and completed within the TVCC Cardinal Connect System.

Library Resources
Students enrolled in distance education courses with TVCC are entitled to the same access to the TVCC Library Resources that are available to all TVCC students. Online card catalogs, research databases and video collections can be accessed at the TVCC Learning Resource Center website.

Netiquette
With the onset of the online education environment and online courses a new buzzword has evolved called, netiquette. Simply defined, it means etiquette on the Internet (or net). In an online course, you will be speaking through writing both to fellow students and instructors, so it is imperative to communicate well and professionally. Mostly, when speaking in an online course, the same rules apply for etiquette as in real-time. The golden rule of netiquette in an online class or environment is, do not do or say online what you would not do or say offline.

1. **Be friendly, positive and self-reflective.** When people cannot see you, and also do not know you, feelings can be hurt if you are not careful in how you express yourself. The old saying, think before you speak is important here. Think before you write. One word of advice is to not respond when you feel angry. Wait. Write it down somewhere and come back to it. When you do, you may find that you no longer feel the same way as you did when you wrote it, because you have had time to reflect about the situation. Last, if you still feel the need to be heard, then edit before you post, and write it in terms that are easily embraced. When you feel a critique is necessary, say it in a positive tone. Reread what you have written to be sure it is positive.

2. **Use proper language and titles.** *Do not use “text” slang* or even profane words in an online education environment, even if they are words you consider, "not so bad," as they will sound offensive to the reader. Do not refer to your professor as "Doc" or by his or her first name, unless it is acceptable with him or her to do so. Also, do not use caps lock when writing, as it insinuates yelling.

3. **Use effective communication.** This takes practice and thoughtful writing. Try to speak and write clearly at all times. Reread before you respond. Define and restate your words when necessary. Correct a misunderstanding right away. Be mindful of chosen words and joking.

4. **Professionalism.** Leave the characters like smiley faces, and instant message abbreviations out. Your friends may like it, but chances are, your professor will not. Save
it for personal conversations or definitely ask for permission before using them. They may be interpreted as childish or too casual for the online education environment. Last, always say please and thank you.

5. **Ask for clarification.** If you are unsure of what was said, or the instructor's directive, or are trying to interpret a person's expressions, then ask again. Do not sit in silence either misunderstanding or feeling offended. A simple way to do this is to say (or write), "I did not understand...", always keeping the sense of the misunderstanding on yourself.

**Scholastic Dishonesty**

Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating on a test, plagiarism, and collusion. "Plagiarism" shall be defined as the appropriating, buying, receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any means another's work and the unacknowledged submission or incorporation of it in one's own written work. "Collusion" shall be defined as the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing written work for fulfillment of course requirements. The student who engages in cheating, plagiarism, or collusion will receive the consequence(s) outlined in the course syllabus.

**Student Code of Conduct**

Students enrolled in distance education courses with Trinity Valley Community College are expected to abide by the TVCC Code of Student Conduct, outlined in the **TVCC Catalog**. When interacting and communicating in a distance education course with the instructor and fellow classmates, students are expected to follow all guidelines outlined in the Code of Conduct. Students who violate these policies and guidelines will be subject to disciplinary action, including but not limited to denial of access to distance learning courses, removal from the course, and/or suspension or withdrawal from Trinity Valley Community College. For tips on “netiquette” (etiquette on the internet), refer to the “Netiquette” section of this handbook.

**Taking Proctored Exams**

Exams for distance education courses may require a proctor. To take a proctored exam in your TVCC distance education course, you may visit any of the TVCC campuses. **NOTE: You MUST arrive at the TVCC testing centers at least 1 hour prior to closing (so that you are able to COMPLETE your testing before they close) with proper PHOTO identification.**

- **Testing in Athens** – The Testing Center is usually open during TVCC business hours. Please check the testing center schedule for scheduled closings. In the event that the testing center is closed, you can test at the Athens LRC during their posted hours of operation.
- **Testing in Palestine, Terrell, or Kaufman** – Students are allowed to test at the LRC of the respective satellite campuses. Please visit the website to determine their hours of operation.
If you need to take your proctored exams at a facility other than TVCC, you must receive approval by your instructor. This approval should be secured EARLY in the semester so that arrangements can be made with the institution that is willing to proctor the exams. Do NOT wait until the last day of the testing window to discuss this with your instructor.

Withdrawal from Distance Education Courses
Withdrawal from distance education courses with Trinity Valley Community College must be initiated by the scheduled “drop date” published in the TVCC Calendar at any of the TVCC Guidance Offices. While some instructors will initiate a drop for students not “attending” or participating in their courses, it is the STUDENT’S responsibility to officially withdraw from a course OR verify that their instructor has initiated a drop on their behalf. For specific details on how to initiate a drop, visit the TVCC Guidance Services webpage. If you receive Financial Aid Title IV funds (Pell, FSEOG, and/or Student Loans), and you withdraw from TVCC, you may owe a refund to the Department of Education. If you have received Financial Aid, please contact the TVCC Financial Aid office prior to withdrawing from any of your TVCC courses.